

Grantee Number: H80CS00779

Project Title: Oral Health Infrastructure

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Applicant Name: Gateway Community Health Center, Inc.

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Type of Application: Competing Supplement

Organization Description: Gateway Community Health Center, Inc. (GCHC) commenced its operations in 1963 as a Migrant Health Program in the border city of Laredo, Webb County, Texas. In 1989, GCHC became an independent, 501 (c) (3), non-profit corporation and evolved as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) by 1992. Today, GCHC delivers its mission, “To Provide Quality Healthcare for Everyone,” for the service area of Webb, Zapata, and Jim Hogg County, Texas.

Description: GCHC proposes the provision of an integrated oral health care service delivery approach by equipping two permanent dental facilities in the economically disadvantaged and underserved service areas of Webb and Jim Hogg County, Texas. Access to stable and affordable oral health care services will enhance residents and the student population’s current oral health outcomes. **1) Jim Hogg County:** Dental equipment for GCHC’s Hebbronville Clinic will establish permanent dental health care services for 5,262 residents¹ composing the rural community. **2) Webb County:** In Webb County’s isolated 78046 sector, GCHC and the Laredo “South” College (LC) campus ensued the first inclusive and innovative health care center project aimed to improve the quality of life for its 69,471 residents² and the student population. GCHC and LC propose academic success via improved health outcomes through accessible and affordable health care services. Permanent dental health care services in Jim Hogg and Webb County sector 78046 will aid in minimizing existing barriers currently affecting both underserved populations.

Need: Jim Hogg and Webb County’s 78046 sector are economically disadvantaged service area locations with health care barriers, such as dental provider shortages, and social health determinants impeding proper oral health care practices. **A total of 74,733 residents compose rural Jim Hogg and sector 78046, with 36.6% of the total population living below the poverty level.** In Jim Hogg, the community’s dental health service access is limited to GCHC’s mobile dental unit with a part-time dentist and dental hygienist who provide services only once a week. A lack of appropriate dental provider to population ratio (5,150:1)³ inevitably inhibits the provision of dental care services needed on a permanent basis. In sector 78046, the student health center will promote access to dental care services for the area’s residents and student population. The UDS Mapper documents that **41.39% of the adult population in Jim Hogg County and 43.63% in Webb County’s 78046 sector have not acquired dental care in the past year.** Both areas of need underperform when compared to Texas’ 59% of adults aged 18+ who have visited a dentist or dental clinic in the past year as by the Centers for Disease Control-Oral Health Data.

Proposed Services: All composing registered patients of GCHC will have access to oral health care services, primary health care, and behavioral health services despite their inability to pay.

Population to be Served: GCHC’s Hebbronville Clinic will establish permanent dental health care services for an estimated 350 service site patients. South Laredo’s first student health center will service approximately 795 new patients. The two locations will generate an estimated 2,290 encounters during the first year of the project. After dental operations have been established, at the two locations GCHC projects to serve 1,452 patients with an estimated 3,630 encounters.

¹ Factfinder.census.gov

² Factfinder.census.gov

³ <https://www.countyelathranking.org>